

was as liberal as they could ask. Then look at the proposed arrangement in the House of Delegates—the popular branch—where all, he had thought, would agree there should be an approximation at least to the popular basis. Is that the general character of the proposition? It is not—far from it. And yet gentlemen talk about liberality. Now were it not for the fact that this Convention had been nearly five months in session, and he was anxious that it should get through with its labors, he would not have voted for it. When men got up on this floor and talked about their power, and of the great danger of injury being done their property, if the House of Delegates should legislate in a particular way, it being so constituted as to be able to do so—where, he asked, was the Senate? Had they not the power to check improper and ill-advised legislation? Certainly they had; and he apprehended there was not the slightest ground of danger. But, he repeated, the Convention had been so long in session, that he was disposed, for his own part, to come down to a compromise, and he thought after surveying of the whole ground, that they had better accept the proposition of the gentleman from Washington, who deserved the thanks of this body for the general excellence of the *project* that he had brought forward.

Mr. BRENT, of Balt. city, would not have troubled the Convention with any observations, but for some remarks which had fallen from his colleague, (Mr. Pressman.) In the vote which he had given to-day, in common with his two colleagues from Baltimore city, (Messrs. Sherwood and Gwin,) he was ready to abide any responsibility which devolved upon him.

The gentleman also, (Mr. Pressman.) might abide the consequences of his own convictions and his own views. He, (Mr. Brent,) took no particular credit to himself in contrast with the course of his other colleagues who differed from him.

He had defined his position according to his honest and sincere convictions of right and of duty months ago, and he intended to adhere to what he had then said.

His colleague, (Mr. Pressman,) had said, that he went for the best scheme that could be obtained. He, [Mr. B.,] had only to say that, his colleague from the first had identified himself with the compromise of this question.

He, on the contrary, had not pursued that course of compromise, but while claiming the rights of his constituents, he had never said that representation according to population, was indispensable to the new Constitution, and he did not say so now. He had made no *sine qua non*, in regard to this particular matter; but he had said this, that while he was willing to take half a loaf, he was unwilling to take any of the crumbs that the Convention were disposed to cast to the sovereign people of Maryland.

He regarded the proposition of the gentleman from Washington, (Mr. Fiery,) as a mere crumb offered to the people he had the honor in part to represent. Now, upon this question, what, he asked, was the position that he had taken?

In justice to himself, he would refer to the debates in this Convention on the fifth of February last. On that day it would be found, he had the honor to declare that the question of representation should be postponed till near the close of their labors, as it was the greatest and most momentous question that could come before this body, because he desired to see the constitutional guaranties which were to precede the adjustment of that question, and because he was opposed to the course of the western reformers here, who were for denying equal and exact justice to his, (Mr. B's.,) constituents, while they claimed their own just rights and every thing that equitably belonged to them as citizens of the State of Maryland.

He had then said that if the rights and privileges of his constituents were to be defeated and taken away from them, he would oppose any compromise—any plan—that did not place them all upon an equal and just platform. Now, what was the proposition then before the Convention? It was based on an odious discrimination between the people of Baltimore city, and the people of the counties. He would show the Convention that Baltimore city and county, Carroll county, and Allegany county, Frederick and Washington counties, have a majority of gross population in the whole State of sixty-eight thousand seven hundred and four, and yet by this boasted compromise, they would be in a minority of five in the House of Delegates, upon the basis of white inhabitants. The same five counties and the city of Baltimore, have a majority of one hundred and thirty-three thousand five hundred and fifty-five inhabitants, and yet they are to be over-slaughed in the House of Delegates by giving to the minority, a majority of five delegates.

Now, was this a just—was it a liberal compromise? And if this project were carried out, there would be found no semblance of equality or justice in it. The gentleman from Carroll, (Mr. Brown) had just said that he would compromise if the scheme of representation was carried throughout. Does the gentleman from Washington propose to do that? No, he proposed a basis of some six thousand of the population on the basis of federal numbers. Why, at that rate Baltimore city would be entitled to between twenty-four and thirty delegates, and yet she is allowed by this Washington county compromise, only ten. How could men who conceived themselves to be acting under great responsibility, and who were desirous to carry out the views of their constituents, act in concert or compromise with others who spoke and acted in the very teeth of their own principles? How, he inquired, could they agree to that which was but a mere empty modification of the present system? He did not consider that the battle had been half fought here. There had been discussions upon propositions to postpone and to refer the subject to a committee, but we had never yet had the light of truth given to the world. He had heretofore been deprived of the privilege of speaking his sentiments, but yet he was gratified to hear those of others. He had never dis-